

BLACK WRITING: YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

During the rebellion Sixties, a great many intellectuals took up the revolutionary struggle being waged by the working class against imperialism, and tried to join that struggle, putting their art on the side of the people. This was certainly true in the black liberation movement, where the Afro-American people, like other oppressed nationalities and oppressed national minorities in the US are doubly oppressed, as workers under monopoly capitalism, but also oppressed and exploited as an oppressed nation by imperialism.

The great Malcolm X emerged, as a revolutionary nationalist and anti-imperialist leader of international stature, to fight against the bourgeois lines of "passive resistance" and "turn the other cheek" and "non-violent revolution." With his clear stance of "Self Determination, Self Respect and Self Defense", Malcolm articulated the political line of the oppressed Afro-American Nation and the exploited black masses throughout the USA. His influence on the whole of the Black Liberation Movement, and on progressive people of all nationalities was tremendous as was his influence on black writers. The fact that Malcolm made a clear break with bourgeois nationalism and cultural nationalism and opposed capitalism meant the bourgeoisie had to kill him.

Malcolm's death and principally the absence of a revolutionary Political Party to serve as a guiding instrument, doomed the movement to eclecticism and spontaneity, just as the absence of such a party, doomed the overall struggle of the US multinational working class and oppressed nationalities .. as well as allied movements like the militant students movement, and the anti-Vietnam war movement, to the same spontaneity, and meant ultimately that rebellion could not then be transformed into revolution.

In the late 70's imperialism is under heavier attack than ever before the US is in open decline after its defeat in Vietnam and Cambodia, Guinea Bissau and Mozambique. But to protect itself the US bourgeoisie constantly put out lies that "the movement is dead"... "everyone has sold out" or been killed or locked up. But this is an obvious lie, the crisis of imperialism is obvious---even from reading their lying newsmags. And as the crisis mounts they heap more and more of the weight of their defeats onto the backs of the people with still more budget cuts, layoffs, cutbacks in social services.

The bourgeoisie also pushes its reactionary lines through bribed elements bought off with the superprofits stolen from the third world, Asia, Africa and Latin America. These elements constitute a small part of the working class itself and the petty bourgeoisie. They turn up pushing their reformist betrayals as trade union bureaucrats, comprador politicians, various movement reformers, and even in the arts, entertainment and sports. Bought out mouthpieces for the status quo, swilling in appointments, grants, awards, big contracts, endowed chairs, fat publishing deals... constantly putting out traitor lies to support the status quo, whether its clothed in metaphysics, abstraction, idealism, whether academic or even fake popular pseudo realism.

But the struggle continues. No amount of bourgeois lies, distortion or violence can eradicate this fact. And though still plagued by the lack of a vanguard revolutionary party, conscious elements all over the country understand this vacuum and are committed to build this revolutionary instrument as their central task. The question before the intellectuals and artists remains the same---whether they will serve the people or serve their enemies. This Writers Conference gives some leading black writers a chance to express exactly what they see as the black writer's role, and the role of the writer and artist generally in the US today and tomorrow.

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UNITY & STRUGGLE NEWSPAPER
presents:

"Black Writing: Yesterday, Today And Tomorrow"

A One Day Conference With 4 Contemporary Black Writers

Saturday, February 11, 1978

RUTGERS UNIV.

175 University Ave. Newark, N.J.

WORKSHOP LEADERS

RICHARD WESLEY, "Black Terror"
NATHAN HEARD, "Howard Street"
CLAUDE BROWN, "Manchild In The Promised Land"
AMIRI BARAKA (LEROI JONES) "Dutchman"

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

3-5 Workshops	5-7 Dinner Break
7-9 Forum & Discussion	9-10 Readings by Writers

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